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TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: PREL, PHUM, SF, ID

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR NELSON MANDELA INTERVENTION WITH
INDONESIA'S PRESIDENT WAHID

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~~CLASSIFIED BY EAP DAS RALPH BOYCE, FOR REASONS 1.5 B AND D.~~

(U) 1. ~~(S)~~ USG IS ENGAGED IN A COORDINATED EFFORT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CONCERNED NATIONS TO URGE THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT TO STOP MILITIAS OPERATING OUT OF WEST TIMOR. AS PART OF THAT EFFORT DEPARTMENT REQUESTS AMBASSADOR LEWIS, OR CHARGE, CONTACT WITH NELSON MANDELA TO ENLIST HIS AID IN DELIVERING A SIMILAR MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT WAHID OF INDONESIA.

BACKGROUND:

(U) 2. ~~(S)~~ EAST TIMOR'S MAIN EXTERNAL THREAT IS FROM MILITIAS BASED LARGELY IN WEST TIMOR. THE GOI HAS PLEDGED TO STOP INDONESIAN MILITARY (TNI) SUPPORT TO THE MILITIAS BUT HAS NOT DONE SO EFFECTIVELY. MILITIA GROUPS HAVE KILLED TWO PEACEKEEPERS IN EAST TIMOR, AND ASSAULTS ON INTERNATIONAL AID WORKERS HAVE LED TO UNHCR SUSPENDING OPERATIONS IN SOME CAMPS IN WEST TIMOR. WE CONTINUE DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON THE GOI TO DISARM AND DISBAND THE MILITIAS, ARREST THEIR LEADERS, KEEP THEM FROM INTIMIDATING REFUGEES AND USING WEST TIMOR AS A BASE FOR INCURSIONS.

(U) 3. ~~(S)~~ WHILE WE DO NOT HAVE ANY EVIDENCE OF DIRECT INVOLVEMENT BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FIGURES IN JAKARTA, NEITHER DO THEY APPEAR TO HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO BRING THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL. EAST TIMOR HAS NEVER BEEN A KEY ISSUE FOR

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INDONESIA'S POLITICAL ELITE. IN ADDITION, DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS THE GOI HAS BEEN PREOCCUPIED WITH THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PEOPLES CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY AND THEN WITH POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS OVER POWER SHARING AND A NEW CABINET. UNLESS THE GOI ACTS IMMEDIATELY, EVENTS IN TIMOR THREATEN TO REACH CRISIS PROPORTIONS WITH REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS.

(U) 4. ~~(C)~~ THE USG IS WORKING THROUGH SEVERAL CHANNELS AND LEVELS TO ALERT THE GOI TO THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM. OTHERS, SUCH AS THE AUSTRALIANS AND THE PORTUGUESE, HAVE ALSO INDICATED THEY ARE ENGAGING THE GOI ON THIS ISSUE. BECAUSE OF NELSON MANDELA'S STATURE AND HIS SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDONESIA, HIS VOICE WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION IN TIMOR.

5. (U) TALKING POINTS FOR AMBASSADOR LEWIS TO USE WITH NELSON MANDELA URGING HIM TO CALL INDONESIAN PRESIDENT WAHID:

AS YOU ARE AWARE, VIOLENCE CONTINUES IN TIMOR. TWO UN PEACEKEEPERS HAVE BEEN KILLED AND OTHERS ATTACKED IN EAST TIMOR BY MILITIA BASED IN WEST TIMOR. MILITIA ELEMENTS ARE

THREATENING UN AID WORKERS IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS IN WEST
TIMOR. OUR AMBASSADOR IN INDONESIA, ROBERT S. ~~GELBARD~~,
REPORTS THAT THE VIOLENCE IN TIMOR HAS BEEN GETTING STEADILY
WORSE.

THERE ARE REPORTS THAT MILITIA ELEMENTS IN TIMOR ARE
RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM THE INDONESIAN MILITARY. MILITIA
MEMBERS WHO HAVE BEEN CAPTURED OR KILLED HAVE BEEN FOUND TO

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HAVE INDONESIAN MILITARY SUPPLIES AND WEAPONS. MILITIA
ACTIVITY ACROSS THE BORDER INTO EAST TIMOR HAS BEEN GROWING,
AND THE INDONESIAN MILITARY HAS NOT STOPPED IT.

MILITIA VIOLENCE IS THREATENING GRAVE HARM TO
INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ASSIST DISPLACED PERSONS IN REFUGEE
CAMPS IN WEST TIMOR AND, THROUGH THE CLIMATE OF FEAR IT
CAUSES IN EAST TIMOR, IS IMPEDING EFFORTS TOWARD DEMOCRACY,
SOCIAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC REBUILDING.

IF THINGS DETERIORATE SHARPLY, INDONESIA WILL ONCE

AGAIN BE AT ODDS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, A SITUATION NO ONE WANTS TO SEE, ESPECIALLY WHEN PRESIDENT WAHID HAS JUST APPOINTED A NEW CABINET. INSTABILITY IN TIMOR WILL ONLY UNSETTLE INTERNATIONAL INVESTORS AND AFFECT PROSPECTS FOR INDONESIA'S RECOVERY.

WE NEED TO PREVENT A DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE IN TIMOR CAUSING CONTAGIOUS HARM IN INDONESIA, IMPEDING REPATRIATION OF REFUGEES IN WEST TIMOR AND BLOCKING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. WE HAVE INDICATIONS THAT THE SITUATION MAY DETERIORATE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE COMING WEEKS, AS THE CNRT MEETS AND SEVERAL SENSITIVE ANNIVERSARIES APPROACH, FOR INSTANCE THE AUGUST 30 CONSULTATION AND THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS SEPTEMBER 4.

WE AND MANY OTHERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FOCUS THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA ON THIS PROBLEM. PRESIDENT CLINTON HAS WRITTEN

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PRESIDENT WAHID; WE HAVE BROUGHT IT UP IN THE UN; SECRETARY ALBRIGHT HAS CONVEYED OUR VIEWS TO FOREIGN MINISTER ~~SHIHAE~~, AND WE ARE LOOKING AT WAYS TO CONTACT OTHER SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL FIGURES SUCH AS VICE PRESIDENT ~~MEGAWATI~~.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE NOT SEEN AN ADEQUATE RESPONSE AND MILITIA VIOLENCE CONTINUES TO INCREASE.

YOU HAVE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT WAHID. THE PEOPLES CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY (MPR) HAS JUST CONCLUDED THEIR ANNUAL DELIBERATIONS AND PRESIDENT WAHID HAS JUST ANNOUNCED A NEW CABINET TO MEET INDONESIA'S CHALLENGES. THIS WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE OCCASION FOR YOU TO CONTACT PRESIDENT WAHID AND, ON THE ONE HAND, CONGRATULATE HIM ON HIS EFFORTS TO STREAMLINE THE CABINET WHILE, ON THE OTHER HAND, URGE HIM TO TAKE CONTROL OF MATTERS IN TIMOR.

AS THE MPR SESSIONS AND PRESIDENT WAHID'S APPOINTMENT OF A NEW CABINET HAVE SHOWN, INDONESIA IS MOVING FORWARD IN NEW WAYS TO DEAL WITH ITS CHALLENGES. IT IS TIME FOR INDONESIA TO PUT TIMOR BEHIND IT. CONTINUING MILITIA VIOLENCE IN TIMOR IS DAMAGING INDONESIA, BOTH INTERNALLY AND IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD. PRESIDENT WAHID MUST BRING A HALT TO THE VIOLENCE, AND BRING THIS CHAPTER IN HISTORY TO AN END. ALBRIGHT

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